

Robert Curvin Interview: Fred Means Interview Trasncrypt

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SPEAKERS

Robert Curvin, Fred Means

Robert Curvin 00:00

Fred, what I'd like to do is have you first start talking about how you got involved in the, or where you're from. And how you got involved in civil rights during the 60s.

Fred Means 00:13

I was born in Pacolet, South Carolina way back out in the sticks. When I went and got grown, I left there when I was nine years old, I went back down when I was grown, and I found out that I had these glorious childhood memories of Pacolet, South Carolina. I thought it was so great. I got back down there and found out it was like the frontiers to civilization. Because the childhood memories didn't match the reality of the situation. So anyway, I lived with my grandmother down there until she died. And then my mother and father I went with them to Saratoga Springs, New York, from there to Philadelphia, then to East Orange, and finally to Newark. So when I guess was about nine or 10 years old, I grew up I grew up in Newark, I graduated from Miller Street, elementary school, South Side High School, and then went on NYU. So Newark really seems like home to me. Then, I guess, somewhere in the early 60s, when we were getting involved in all of these Civil Rights activities across the country. I used to see Bob Curvin, and some of the CORE members meeting down at the Bridge Club. And so I started hanging around with them. And finally, I said, "Well, why are you guys meeting at the Bridge Club?" and then found out that the major ministers in town would not permit CORE which they saw as a radical group to meet at their churches. So CORE was meeting at the Bridge Club. Well, there was a very progressive minister in new Homer Tucker, at the Mount Zion Baptist Church, that was a church that I belong to. And so I don't remember whether I was the person who made the contact but anyway, CORE started meeting in Mount Zion, back around 1960, or 61, something like that. And so I was was involved. And finally in 1964, I believe I became the Chairman of the Congress of Racial Equality, Greater Newark Chapter, Newark-Essex chapter. And we were involved in activities, a lot of picketing, picketing in places like Hoffman La Roche. I remember picketing White Castle, one time, when there was a rainstorm coming, we were circling around White Castle, and I could hear a lot of folks, particularly white people saying, "When they when the rain starts, that they'll they'll stop they'll run." And

so I became determined, all the folks in the line became determined, we were not going to be moved. So we stayed around White Castle and it rained. Boy did it rain! When I got home, I had to wring the water out of my underwear. But it was a determination that we were not going to allow anything to stop us because there White Castle was serving mostly Black people in what would that time was beginning to be a Black community. And they didn't have any, they would not hire any Black folks. Because I remember al- Sears and Roebucks, which was located on Elizabeth Ave. another place where we picketted. I took my two sons on the picket line there. And so representatives, from Sears and Roebucks came out and they started taking pictures. I'm sure they were thought that that would intimidate us, you know? So I said "No, Mark, and Vinnie, come on, we're gonna we're gonna march around and hold your signs up." And they were they were young, they were young kids then. But they became a part and began to understand the need for involvement. And so I went from CORE to what I learned in CORE, I really learned some some protests, I learned how to protest. And so I my profession was education. I was a teacher. And so one of the issues in education at the time was the lack of Black teachers in Newark in the 1960s. And they had a gimmick where the Board of Education had a gimmick where they would hire Black teachers as substitutes and white teachers, as regular teachers, and there was a difference of about \$2,000 in the salary. So we saw that as an injustice as surely it was, and we decided we would we would protest that. And so a group of people, teachers came together, and I really didn't want to be the leader. I really didn't. If someone else would take the leadership, I would be more than happy to step back. But since I gained that experience, they kind of pushed me to becoming the first president of what became the organization of Negro educators: ONE. And it really became a civil rights organization. That's what ONE was. Because we, the teacher organizations at the time were, it's like any other union, there was a new teachers association, then it was (unintelligable), well, the association tried to make believe it was not a union, but in fact, it was a union, affiliated with the NJEA, New Jersey Education Association, and the National Education Association. So they, they were, their purpose was to benefit the teachers, more money, for shorter work hours. I mean, that was a union philosophy, as well it should have been. But what was needed was something to represent the children. And so we in ONE saw ourselves as representing teachers more so than representing, representing the children more so in representing the teachers. And so there was some conflict there, in that, but as we lead into 1967, with the Rebellion that occurred, ONE became an important part of that whole movement. Because Addonizio was the mayor at the time, it was known that anything in Newark could be bought if the Mayor got his 10%. So, so we I remember having a meeting with Mayor Addonizio. Once [unintelligable] that is the group of 20. We wanted to talk about the educational situation, and Addonizio impressed upon us, he said, listen, education is a political process, you guys, don't be naive, you have to understand that. And said, if you do something for me, I'll do something for you. That's the way the game was played. Say you take Duke Brown over there, Duke brown was a Black teacher who had met with the mayor and he said, Duke Brown came to me and said he wanted to do some things. And, and so I'm gonna do some things for for him, and he, so he may Duke Brown in charge of personnel with the Board of Education, a big position, Board of Education. But that's the process through which those kinds of things happen. I never was able to get a position. Like, thank goodness, my friend, John Thomas, was at Rutgers. And so in 1970, he offered me an opportunity to work at the Graduate School of Education in a teacher intern program. And so that's what that's what I did. But then, when we all worked to get Ken Gibson in as mayor, in 1970, well, before that we worked, we worked with him in 1966 but he lost at that time, trying to get him to be the first Black mayor of Newark. But in 1970, we all got together, and he in fact, became the first mayor. Well, one of the things that he

wanted me to do, now, this was 1973, he asked me if I would serve on the Board of Education. And I did. But just to show you how you do make some sacrifices, I had to resign, I was on leave, to go out to, to Rutgers, because I didn't know what I wanted to do. I was working on a degree and I was working at Rutgers at the same time. And so I had to decide whether I wanted to go back into public school education, or stay on the on the university level. And so I had to make make a decision. But when I, when I was asked to go on the Board of Education in Newark. I had to give up my leave. And I had nine-, some 96 days, six days, by the way that that I gave, and I re-, I resigned my position and became a member of the Board of Education. And I served for three, three years. And what I found most interesting, I guess, on the Board of Education was that it wasn't a really about children, I found I was very disappointed. It was one of the most frustrating experiences in my life those three years I spent on Board of Education, because I wanted to help children and change the change to help change the system so that it would be a benefit to children. What I found was it was about patronage and money. That really was what the Board of Education was about. The mayor let it be known that he was involved in the process of appointing people if people did things for him if they were interested in education positions and education they, they could get those positions by doing something for him.

Robert Curvin 10:03

This was Mayor Gibson.

Fred Means 10:04

This was uh, well no, I'm talking about Addonizio, during that during that period of time.

Robert Curvin 10:09

But in 73?

Fred Means 10:12

Okay, okay, in 7- in 73, Mayor Gibson was was the was the Mayor. Yeah, I was, I guess I was going back to Addonizio. But my point is that people who have been on the outside, on the other side of the microphone on the outside looking in, I found many of them, were doing some of the same kinds of things that we fought against. That was very very disappointing to me. Because I was now on the other side of the microphone. And some of the people who were there with me, they were involved in patronage and money and contracts and stuff, too. And so I never I was always frustrated. You know, I mean, for example, the, uh, Charlie Bell who at that time was the chair of the board would come and say, we have, we have six jobs, the board members get. And I always told (?) that, "Look Charlie, I don't, I don't want any jobs. That's not why I'm on the board. So if you guys are gonna to do that, fine. But don't give me any jobs, I don't want any jobs, I don't want to dispense any jobs. That's not why I'm here. In fact, I wrote a piece called the other side of the microphone, and I'll make it available. Maybe there's some things in there that can be useful in better explaining this story. But I have to, I spent five years at Rutgers 1975, I finished my doctorate. And I then had to decide whether I wanted to go back and perhaps be a superintendent of schools, or did I want to stay on the university level? Well, I interviewed, I really had the idea at that time that I could take a small elementary school and make a difference, I was convinced that if if you could have some control over your personnel, the hiring and firing, you know, if you could shake some of the wrinkles out of the bureaucracy, that you could be very successful in taking a small school and making it successful, because I'd worked in Headstart for three

summers in 1967, 8, and 9, or eight, nine and 70. Anyway, and that's where it occurred to me that with a small group of people that you can have, say about more say about more control over more selection. And you have a philosophy you have you have you have a theme, you have a purpose that you can that school can be successful involving those parents, and those teachers. I never had that opportunity. That was what I wanted to do initially was to get a pri-, an elementary school and become the principal and develop that school. I never got a chance to do that. Because the job that I got offered was at Jersey City State. And

Robert Curvin 13:10

Let me go back to the 60s because I want you to talk more, we can go back to education, which is really terrific. And I'd love to do more than that. And I know that's your passion. But I want to go back to your some of your perceptions, A) about what the city was like in terms of the opportunity available for not only teachers, but for other people as well.

Fred Means 13:37

Yeah. That, well, you know, I grew up in Ohio, as I said, I came when I was not 10 years old. So I was in elementary school. And I remember discrimination as an elementary school kid. You know, I graduated from from Miller Street Street in 1947. And from Southside High School in 1951. And I remember, for example, that we couldn't go skating. There were two skating rinks around one was in Newark at the border of Elizabeth. Another one was right across the border in Elizabeth Dreamland and Twin City. Blacks back early in those early days couldn't go to those places. Kids wanted to go skating, you know, the white kids would go down to Dreamland, the Twin City, we couldn't go there. Then through I don't know what process but they finally opened up and said, "Well, okay, you guys can come on Thursdays." And so we started going out Thursday nights and and that was the night that we would go and then for years afterwards that will be the although they finally broke the whole thing broke down. But for years then we would that was our favorite night because we'd go on Thursday night, but that was just one example. Some of the stores downtown Hahnes, Bamberger's. All those major department stores down there early on, would not hire. Now by the time I got to college I worked at S. Kleins. I helped one work my way through college at S. Klein so it had begun to change that would have been after the period of the 60s, but during the period in the 50s, I guess the 40s and 50s and leading into the 60s, Newark had a lot of discrimination. Employment was a major one. I mentioned Hawthorne LaRoche, in fact, there's a friend of mine now that talks about CORE helped him get that job at Hoffman LaRoche and and there were the telephone company. All those all those companies CORE really helped helped. A lot of Black professionals get jobs there. You know, I'd see. Okay, that's all those guys know (knew?). And they will they will thank CORE for that for that effort.

Robert Curvin 15:46

Do you remember any of the meetings that CORE had with companies, for example, and those kinds of experiences?

Fred Means 15:54

I remember meeting with the Budweiser people. Ray, Ray Proctor, and I, and a few, I can't remember who else we met with but yeah, we met with them. Ray was always very, very aggressive. And, and he was very, very quick to to, to attack. He was like the attack dog. And so I guess we all had our roles I

was more more relaxed, and I'd be like the mediator in the group. But yes, we had, we had meetings with with all those companies. And it was interesting to see how they would they would come in. I remember meeting with the Hahne's man one time. I guess he was the I guess he was the president of Hahne's in Newark. And he had hired a lawyer to be in the meeting. So he wouldn't he would kind of that that was kind of he would be that the lawyer would be the attack dog. And so yes, those meetings were very, very heated many times. And I always tried to help the White folks and the business people kind of understand what was happening in the Black community. And because a lot of times I don't think they really understood they, some of them did, but others were, it was just part of the practice. That's the way it was. And so it wasn't that they was anti-Black, necessarily. But that was the way it was you just didn't hire Black folks. You know. So yeah, some of those some of those meetings were very, very interesting. And I learned a lot.

Robert Curvin 17:25

How did how did CORE get its information about these companies?

Fred Means 17:29

People, people would, people would come call the CORE office and complain about things and police brutality. That was probably the biggest thing that I got involved in in 64, when I was the chair, because there was a shooting over in the North Ward of man named Lester Long was shot in the back of the head by Martinez, who subsequently became councilman in Newark. Ironical as that may seem. He, the story that the residents told us, people who observers there told us was that, Lester Long, Martinez had Lester Long in the car with him, talking to him for a long time. And then all of a sudden Lester Long opened the door and started running. And Martinez got out of his car, aimed at the back at the fleeing Lester Long and shot him in the back of the head so he died right there. Well, there were a lot of, number of people who call the CORE office about that. And so we got involved in a number of rallies about that trying to mobilize people to expose this kind of thing that was happening in Newark and police brutality, how the police, police didn't didn't care, that there was a man, the director was a man named Spina. And he and Addonizio. They were birds of a feather, you know, and Addonizio, Spina was bad, (he was?) a bad man in my opinion. And so they they would ignore that, that kind of thing. Well, we got James Farmer who was a direct- National Director of CORE we had a big rally in downtown Newark Military Park that was covered all over, all over the world, really. But and it was to, to bring some justice to the citizens regarding police brutality. And it's interesting in all the years now, you know, some 40 50, 60 years, we still have it, some of those same issues, the police treating people unfairly and not giving them an opportunity to to receive justice.

Robert Curvin 19:43

Let me ask you a little bit about the internal workings of CORE and what you remember or recall about some of the dynamics, the kind of membership to people that were part of the group. How it got to itself prepared for demonstrations and things of that kind. Can you talk a little bit about that?

Fred Means 20:05

Yeah we had a very mixed group of people in CORE. You had people who were professionals and in various professions, you had people who were were cit- average citizens, people who were truck drivers, people who were laborers. But who had this understanding that there needed to be some

resistance to what was going on in our community. And so we would meet. And I don't know whether we met weekly, I forget exactly how often we met. But then we had an office on Mark- West Market Street, so we would meet there. And people would call in, they'd call in threats, they'd call in and say, We gonna, we gonna bomb that place at noon. I tended to ignore those. But I remember Gail Lissek one time so we were in the office together. She was a white woman. And I think she was a social worker. And the call came in and said, uh well I think it was two o'clock the CORE office is supposed to blow up. I said, Well, okay I kinda passed it off. Got to be going on two o'clock. Gail said, Okay Fred I think I'll leave. Okay, Gail I understand but you never knew. I mean, we never the office never was blown up. But we were constantly getting those kinds of threats. And so yeah, there was there was some some concern about it. Because there had been a situation in Alabama, in, in, in the south various places in the south, where there was just (?) physical damage. And of course, CORE had gotten involved in the bus in the the bus boycotts, and not the bus boycott, but the bus rides uh Freedom Rides, Freedom Rides. Right. CORE was involved in that. So yeah - Did you participate in any of those rides to Baltimore? No, I never. I never went to Baltimore. But I tell you what, what probably got me into more interested in and resolved to fight discrimination. I served three years in the Army. And I was drafted. And we spent first four months. No, not four months, eight weeks, I guess, in basic training down at Camp Pickett, Virginia. And we had, we had our first leave, I guess, after the half of the time, we were gonna get a weekend so we had a weekend pass. We came into Black, Black stone, I think Black Stone, Virginia, and we rode a bus and the two of us one fella from Texas, and another fellow from New Jersey, and myself. And so we got in, and we took the bus in and said, "Where are we going? What are we going, we're gonna eat?" I said, look around, say, "Well, look, there's a cafeteria up on the top of the bus station, let's go up there." Fellow from Texas said, "Well, I don't know." I said, "Hey, come on." So we went there. And we sat down, and I noticed the waitress kept she just kind of ignored us. She just kind of kept walking around back foot. So finally I raised my hand, I said, Hey, hey come on, we want to get some service So she came over and she said, "Well, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I can't serve y'all here. Say, y'all can go around to the to the back there. There's a place that you can eat there." And this, this feeling came over me. I said, the irony of our preparing to fight a war for America. And here we are in in Camp Pickett in Virginia. And we can't eat in a cafeteria. I said the irony of that, and that that kind of that feeling, I still have to still feel strongly about it even telling that story now. I think that was one of the things that caused me to get as involved in, in civil rights as I did.

Robert Curvin 24:09

When you when you think back of that experience in the 60s and being out front and have an organization as publicly, you know, known and prominent as CORE. What kind of impact did it have on you personally and on your family?

Fred Means 24:31

Well, Helen, my wife, Helen, came on some of the demonstrations but for the most part, and I took the children on a few I didn't take them a lot. (Not?) a lot of those demonstrates I took them on a few but they were they were uh supportive. And that really was was all I expected them to do. No, they were supportive. And they would come for there were occasions we were gonna picket a certain place, they would come or they would come to some- Helen would come to some of the meetings that CORE would have. But I really very much involved in 64. And during that period 64, 65, I was very much

involved in it. I would get telephone calls at three o'clock in the morning, because I never changed my phone. I never changed my phone number. Because I wasn't running from anybody. But I get these calls. So you know, that was kind of emotionally upsetting sometimes

Robert Curvin 25:33

Because of threat(s)?

Fred Means 25:35

Sometimes it'll be threats, and sometimes it's be crazy- I had also there was a crazy woman used to call me three o'clock in the morning. She, she was just a looney tune. You know? And I would, because people would call about issues, you know, and I would, if they call me about an issue, even though it were two or three o'clock in the morning, I would try to listen to it. But there was this one woman who would call and she was definitely crazy. So yeah, though there were that would, you know, that would upset your equilibrium, you know, that kind of thing. That the threats sometimes. I guess I tended to be too cavalier, because I never took 'em as seriously as probably I should have, you know, because I'm sure there was there was danger, more danger around me than I, than I acknowledged, you know, because I would go out, we used to have the street rallies, I'd go out in front of the CORE offices and stand on the soapbox. And I'd talk for several hours talking about situation in Newark, you know, and, and I'd have people all around me and most I didn't ever feel as though anybody there was threatening, but you'd see some strange you'd look around and you'd see some strange people. And I remember when when when the CORE Director, National CORE director James Farmer came, and we were down in Military Park. There were there were some people that some of them might have been law enforcement people, but some people that I didn't particularly recognize. And so yeah, there was some times when, when I'm sure there was more danger around me than than I knew. And we were sued, by the way, which I guess I should have mentioned, that situation with the police brutality with Martinez. Martinez sued us because actually, it was Gail Lissek who had written this flyer that said, Martinez is a murderer. That really was my my language so, uh, but we were sued. And we were served at the at the time that James Farmer came just before the rally that was a strategy to try to shake us up I'm sure. Just before the rally, to go down to Military Park. The lawyers came in and they served James Farmer, and they served me and some of the other people in court at the time. (laughs) Bob Curvin. (laughs). And so we were, we had the suit against us. And I didn't really know what would happen with it. Whether personally, I would wind up having to pay anything for this. But in the the when the lawyers called us and they finally realized that it wasn't, it wasn't me, who had used that language. They realized and they hadn't charged Gail, because I think I mentioned to him, I said, "Well, I don't know, maybe Gail wrote that, I don't know who wrote it," wrote it called him a murderer. And so he said, you know, "We we should have gotten we should have subpoenaed Gail Lissek should have charged her, but she didn't get charged, god rest her soul she's not with us anymore. But yeah, there was some there was some some some hot times and interesting times. And we finally I think, the lawyers, we had some lawyers that that worked with us. And I think we finally did pay some nominal fee.

Robert Curvin 28:57

Offered an apology.

Fred Means 28:58

Yeah offered an apology and paid paid some nominal amount. Not personally, there was some of our supporters, gave, gave money. So I never personally I never suffered monetarily, because of anything. Well, let me not say that I'm not in terms of getting money, but I never was able to get a administrative job and in the Newark school system. That was for sure. Because the superintendent at the time, Titus I- at one point I was Ben Epstein, who was the assistant superintendent of schools in charge of Secondary Education, asked me if I would this is early on, if I would agree to be the vice principal at Weequahic High School. And I said, Well, sure I'd do it? And then later on, he came back, he said, You know, I proposed your name, but the superintendent said, No, you you you are not gonna get anything. And under Titus I wouldn't I wouldn't get any position. So yes, that was a retaliation for, for my involvement in CORE and ONE because at one point as as the president of ONE I asked for the resignation of Franklin Titus, so then well he didn't like that, you know, and a lot of a lot of the guys who were pushing me up, you know, I was the sacrificial lamb. But I was in the position. And it was right. It was what had to be done. He needed, he needed to resign. So we asked for his resignation. So yes, there was some, I got some personel. And I guess that followed me because I know when I went to interview for the job at Jersey City, President Maxwell, who turned out later to be be a good friend of mine, he was kind of suspicious as to whether because the dean that wanted to hire me was Woman(?), and Woman(?) and I had an understanding he, you know, he appreciated what I where I'd come from and what I was doing. But Bill Maxwell was somewhat concerned whether Fred Means would come out there and be a radical at Jersey City State College. And I guess I did join, they had a group out there called BABSO administrative alumni, Black everybody who's familiar with the college. And so I got involved with them. And really what happened was I because of the various skills that I had learned through CORE and OBE and the other activities, was able to help move the college forward during that period, you know.

Robert Curvin 31:36

What do you think are the major lessons that you and I and all of us who were involved at that time can draw from that experience that we might pass on to younger people today?

Fred Means 31:53

You know, I think if you have to, as a young person coming along, you have to rise to meet whatever the challenge is that confronts you, now there - I could have looked at Civil Rights, and not participated, I could have just just not participated. Or I could recognize that this is something that is important. And that I must get involved in. So I think young people coming along today need to take a look at what what are the issues? What is the issue of what are the issues that uh, of your time? You know? And are you going to just do nothing? Are you just going to let it pass you by? Or, or, are you going to get involved? And I think that's the challenge. The challenge during my period that I grew up in during the 60s, the challenge was civil rights and human rights. And I chose to get involved. And I don't completely understand why. But I did. It was a challenge. And I don't I don't regret it because it helped develop me in in, in so many other things. You know, I went on to Jersey City. And I retired as professor and dean, dean emeritus of education at Jersey City State College. And so a lot of the things that I did as dean, I learned back in CORE, and you know, in a way, all of that was a part of my development into who I am today. So that that will be the challenge.

Robert Curvin 33:37

Is there anything that we've missed that you would want to add to this wonderful tape that we have now of your recollections of that period?

Fred Means 33:46

I told when I first got on the Board of Education, and I'm gonna give you that piece. Well, actually, it's the only copy I have -

Robert Curvin 33:53

Ok. We can make them make a copy of it. Do you have you ever printer here?

Fred Means 33:56

Uh, yeah, but it's on that 18 it's 8 and a half by 14. That's the only problem with it.

Robert Curvin 34:01

Okay, I have a scanner, I can scan it.

Fred Means 34:03

Okay, alright, good, because I pulled it out, in preparation to your coming and I put a copy of it over there. And I found that it's the only copy I have left of what I call the other side of the view from the other side of the microphone when I got to the Board of Education. And so it really explains a lot of things that I saw at that time, and thinking and thinking and what led up to, to my being involved there, you know, with the Parker Callahan issue at the board, because ONE became one of the leaders in that because we were involved in education. That was one of the reasons for the Kerner Commission said, for the riot, for the rebellion, and it was the fact that Addonizio would not appoint the best qualified candidate. He would appoint his political friend, which is what it was all about. Were you around during the rebellion? Yeah, yeah, as a matter of fact, interestingly enough, and even before that, I lived on Tuxedo Parkway in Newark. And I had moved into at that time it was the West Ward. It was predominately white at that time, and I had a Growler(?) green Rambler station wagon. And I parked I guess this was before the ride when this happened, it was it was. But when in the first run that Ken Gibson had for for mayor, my Rambler station wagon was sitting out in front and I had been using it to rally. So I had all these support Ken Gibson, all this kind of stuff sitting on my car out in front of my house at 65 tuxedo Parkway in Newark. And one morning, Sunday morning, somebody called me and said, Have you seen your car? I said no. He said, Well look out the window. Somebody had come along and stuck ice picks in all four of my tires. So the car was sitting right, right flat. And that was because I was in this, I rea- , trying to analyze it, I think the person didn't really know me. Whoever did it. They knew that they probably thought it was a white person who owned that car who was supporting, supporting Gibson. And so they did that. So I- so that was one of the things I suffered from. But back then what was the question?

Robert Curvin 36:25

About the rebellion. What were you doing at that time? What were your activities?

Fred Means 36:31

Yeah, we had just met with with with Addonizio on the steps of City Hall. A day, the night, the night that the riot started, we had we had met with with Addonizio for (unintelligible) talking about the Parker Callahan issue. And somebody in Philadelphia told me, I was interviewed on the steps of City Hall. And somebody from Philadelphia later told me they saw that and that they were so impressed with that interview because I one of the things I said was that there's no justice here I talked about the Parker Callahan, as you explained it. And I said there's no justice in Newark. And it seemed to come across. Now that I don't think that wasn't played locally, but it was played other places that people told me about, you know, but and so. My mother, I grew up on Ridgewood Avenue, which is in the South Ward, Clinton Hill section of Newark. And my mother was still living in the house that I grew up in. And so I lived in the West Ward now the West Ward to get from my house, down to the to, to my mother's house. I had to go through down Clinton Avenue. And I remember one day trying to get trying to get there. This was after the Riots started. And we were driving down Clinton Avenue and I had my wife and two kids in the car. And these national guardsmen were out there and looking up and shooting I said, Oh, (?) I better turn around. So I turned the car around and went up back up and took a street over towards Hillside and came in from the other- But yeah, that kind of thing was happening and, and I wanted to go check on my mother to make sure that everything was all right there. When that incident happened over at the the Fourth Precinct, I was not there. No, I was not there. But I do remember, for example, going up Clinton Avenue sometime during that period, and seeing the Newark police car stop on Clinton and Bergen there was a liquor store there. And the policeman got out, went in and got bottles and kegs of whiskey and put it in the trunk of the police car to take it out to the suburbs somewhere. So I witnessed that, you know. So all that, you know, makes you understand that there was no justice for black folks in Newark, you know, and it was all about, it was all about power, and money. So, the economic situation is still a struggle for black folks, and we need to have our kids get more serious about education. That's a major problem with the attitude. There's a there's a kind of anti intellectual attitude among many poor black folks, you know, it comes out (?) intellectual attitude among many poor black folks, you know, it comes out into kids in that they don't they don't think it's smart, it's cool to be smart. They there's a young man who graduated from from Southside during the time I was teaching there, who went to Princeton, and graduated and got a degree in history, I believe. And but he said, "You know, I want to come back and teach at South Side." And I saw him a few months ago. And he said, "Fred, I'm back I'm, I'm a teacher, I'm a history teacher at South Side." Malcolm- now Malcolm X. Shabazz. And he said, "But it's so depressing, because I can't. There's so many anti forces that the kids are involved in, until I can't really do and get across the net the things that I want to. I said, now how sad that here's a young man, brilliant young young guy, who went to Princeton graduated, came back wanted to give to the community and to the school, and now he's getting discouraged. And that's sad. So that there's something that has to happen in the black community among Black people to address this issue of that I just called anti intellectualism. In other words, to make education a high priority, because it really truly is through education that we got to bring ourselves out of colony(?) is through education.

Robert Curvin 41:18

Fabulous. Thanks Fred.